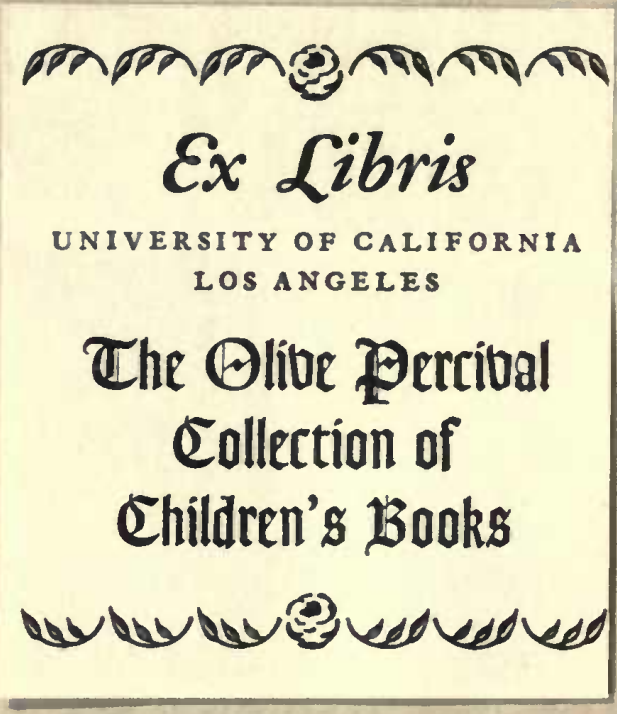
THREE BASKETS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HTB (149)

Mr MARKHAM PRESENTING THE THREE BASKETS.
WHATMAN
T. H. Jones lith

THE

THREE BASKETS:

OR, HOW

HENRY, RICHARD, AND CHARLES,

WERE OCCUPIED,

While Papa was away.

BY MRS. BURDEN.

FOURTH EDITION.

LONDON:

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THE THREE BASKETS.

CHAP. I.

On the morning of New Year's Day, Mr. Markham called his three children, Henry, Richard, and Charles, into the breakfast room, where he and their mother sat. On the table were three covered baskets; which the boys had never seen before, and on which they could not help fixing their eyes as soon as they entered the room.

"My good boys," said their father, "these three baskets are for you. I shall be obliged to leave home in a few days: and perhaps may

not be able to return for some months. I will give to you, Henry, the first choice of the baskets, without your knowing the contents; to Richard, the next; and little Charley must take the remaining one: at the end of six months, when I hope I shall have returned, I will see which of you has made the best use of what his basket contains. Now, Henry, choose."

Henry stepped forward. The three baskets were just alike in size and shape. For a moment, he hesitated, then said, laughing, "It is no matter which I choose, for I cannot tell what is inside by looking at the outside; and it is of more consequence that I make a good use of my choice." He took that which was nearest him.

Richard said, "Henry, will you open your basket before I make my choice, that I may see what is in it?

Henry lifted the lid, and took out first a

large roll of paper, then a box of colours, crayons, lead and camel's-hair pencils, a book containing sketches, a pallet, and many other things used in drawing. "Oh! what a pity," said Henry, "that you did not get this basket, Richard, you can draw so much better than I can."

"But," said Richard, "this will soon make you draw better than I do. Now, for my choice," he added, lifting up one of the two remaining baskets. "Oh! how heavy it is," he exclaimed, as he nearly let it fall on the floor, "I think it must be a block of marble, or something of that sort. I suppose, as Henry has chosen to be a painter, papa intends that I should be a sculptor."

On opening Richard's basket, there were found a small saw, a hammer, two planes, compasses, a rule, square, gimlet, nails, screws, some glue, a vice, &c., indeed, all that is required in carpenters' work, except wood, which

his papa said he would get in an out-house where a carpenter had lately worked.

And now, Charles, the youngest, was impatient to see his basket opened; and greatly was he delighted to find in it a number of things suited for gardening: papers of seeds of various kinds; roots of crocuses, tulips, lilies, ranunculuses, hyacinths, cuttings of woodbine, roses, jasmine, gooseberries; with cauliflowers, artichokes, &c. and Price's Modern Gardener, which not only told what should be sowed and planted, and done in the garden, every month of the year, but how it should be done.

"And I will give you, Charles," said his father, "a plot in my garden, (as your own old one is too small for the great things I see you mean to do now,) and a new spade, rake, hoe, and watering-pot."

Little Charles jumped with delight. Though it was winter, and there were no leaves on the trees, and no flowers in the fields, in his own

CHARLES INSTRUCTED IN GARDENING BY OLD ADAM.
T. H. Jones Inv
WHATMAN

mind, he thought he could see what his garden would be in summer, the nice level walks that he would beat so hard with his feet and the back of his spade; the little flower-beds, with their neat borders of daisies or cowslips; the plot filled with peas, and cauliflowers, and artichokes, the gooseberry bushes and strawberry bed, all were like a picture before his eyes; and thanking his papa for the kind present he had made him, he ran across the room to tell his mamma all he meant to do.

Henry, the eldest, was nine years old, Richard was eight, and Charles was but six and a half. Henry felt as if he, being the eldest, ought on this occasion to say something more than just "thank you, papa," and not knowing what to say, looked ashamed, held down his head, and said nothing.

"What has perplexed or distressed you, Henry?" said his father, smiling; "I am afraid you do not like your basket."

"That is not it," said Henry, "but I was thinking how I could thank you enough for so great a present: for if you only gave me a piece of bread, or an apple, I should say, "I thank you," and surely this deserves a great many more thanks than such trifling things; and then, I was afraid if I said some of the things I was inclined to say, that you would laugh at me."

"I understand you, quite, Henry; and if it is any comfort to you in your present embarrassment, I can tell you, many grown-up people feel on such occasions pretty much what you now feel: but do not be afraid that we will laugh at you. Never force yourself to say more than you feel, in order to please people; but when you do feel pleased and grateful, try not to be ashamed to express it."

"And I have not thanked you either," said Richard; "but instead of thinking what I should say, I was considering if I could make

any thing that would save you from having to send for a carpenter: Could I put up the shelf mamma yesterday said she wanted in her closet?"

"You will require some practice before you can do much useful work as a carpenter," said Mr. Markham; "but if your mamma will allow you to measure the length of the place the shelf is intended to fit, and tell you the breadth she wishes it, you could set down on paper the dimensions, that is, the number of inches long and broad, and look about for a piece of board that would suit; then saw and plane it neatly; and when you have skill enough in your art, to put it up, so that it will not tumble down and do mischief. And now I must go out for an hour or two; so examine your stores, and consult about your plans."

"We will; thank you, thank you, papa," said the three boys, running to bring their papa his hat and gloves.

CHAP. II.

It was three days from the time the baskets had been given, till the day Mr. Markham had fixed to leave home, and during those three days the boys asked their father to explain to them the use of some of the things in their baskets; but they did not begin any piece of work while he was with them, that they might have time to do any little business their father gave them to do; for although they were so young, they could be trusted to do many useful things.

Henry wrote a very neat hand, and was set to copy some letters, which he did with only one or two slight mistakes. In one place he left out a "for," that made the whole sentence sound like nonsense, and in another place he

wrote the word "sufficiently" twice over, which looked quite ridiculous. His mother, however, altered the errors, and on the whole, his papa was well pleased, and said that Henry had saved him much time and trouble.

Richard got a list of the books his father meant to take with him, and brought all the volumes to where his mother was packing up; he ran for all the people who were wanted, that they might be told what they were to do while Mr. Markham was away. And even little Charles was employed in printing, in large plain letters, his papa's name on some cards to be put on his trunks and travelling bag.

And now, at last, papa was gone; and the three boys, as they saw him drive from the door, would gladly have given their baskets, and all the yet untried means of amusement which they possessed, to have him still with them.

Their mamma had gone to her own room,

and gave them the remainder of the day to play; but they could not play, nor laugh, just then, so they agreed that each would take the book belonging to his own basket, and go to their play-room, where they were not likely to be disturbed, and study what their books contained.

Henry soon began to be interested in the life of a painter, which was given in the book allotted to him, when some sound disturbed his attention. He looked up, and saw that Richard was balancing a stick on his finger, and that Charles was sleeping under a table. "Oh," said Henry, "this will never do, we must do something for the general amusement; let us tell stories, that will not disturb mamma. But we must awaken Charles. Ho! Charley, my boy! wake, and hear the wonderful, surprising, marvellous, and astonishing histories we are going to tell," and he pulled Charles by the sleeve.

Poor Charles had been sleeping very uncomfortably; for his ear had rested on the handle of a battledore, and it was painful for some time; so he was glad to rise from his uneasy pillow.

They drew their chairs round the fire, and each told a story of his own inventing. They should be given here; but as these stories were, it must be confessed, a little foolish, it is better that my young readers should not hear them, lest they might lose their respect for the little Markhams.

From this time, they spent more of their play hours in the different amusements of drawing, carpenter's work, and gardening. Henry, by great industry and some advice and instruction from his mother, improved so much in drawing, that he grew extremely fond of the employment.

Richard planed, and sawed, and measured, and intended to make a great many things;

but various accidents befel his work. At one time, he drove a nail so far into a slight board, that he split it from one end to the other. At another, in sawing an end off a piece of board, to make it a proper length, the saw took a wrong direction, and made it too short for his purpose.

One day, Henry, who had begun a large picture, wished that he had a drawing board to paste the edges of the paper on, that it might lie flat; and Richard thought he could make one; so he went and cut a very nice piece of board perfectly square, and planed it quite smooth; he then rubbed it over with sand paper, to make it look very well: and took it to Henry, who thanked him with great delight, when he saw the very thing he wanted; and he thought how kind it was of Richard to take so much pains to make it for him.

Then Henry got a little paste, and pasted the margin of the picture neatly down on the

HENRY DRAWING FLOWERS UNDER HIS MOTHERS TUITION.
T. H. Jones
WHATMAN

board and left it near the fire to dry; but when he came back, he found his new drawing-board as if it were rolling itself up, and he could not make it flat again. He took it to Richard, to show him what had happened; but Richard did not understand why this accident had occurred, or how to remedy it, any more than Henry did: so they agreed to take it to their mother, who was often applied to in their difficulties, for direction, explanation, or advice.

She told them, that the heat of the fire had made the wood contract on one side that was next to it, because it was not sufficiently seasoned; but she said the wood was not so liable to warp, as it is called, in the direction that the fibres run lengthwise, as it was across the fibres. For that reason, in making a drawing-board, or other thing that has no frame-work to keep it from warping in the manner described, it was necessary to fasten another piece of board on the underside of the drawing

board, so that the fibres of the two boards should lay across each other.

Richard understood this quite well, and he began to make another. He prepared two pieces of wood exactly the same size and shape, and placed the one on the other in the manner his mother had described. Finding that they fitted perfectly, and were touching in every part, he joined them nicely together with glue, and putting a heavy weight upon them, he left them to dry. Next day, the drawing-board was firm and strong, and proved very serviceable to Henry; and his mother gave Richard great praise for his perseverance.

CHAP. III.

The weather was so bad, that Charles got out but little to his garden; and when he was there, he did not know how to begin, the plot looked so large; till his mother went with him, and gave him a long piece of cord with a stick fastened to each end; and showed him that by putting the one little stick into the earth, at one side of the plot, and taking the cord tightly across to the other, and putting down the other stick there, he would mark out his walks quite straight.

When he had done this, and beat them hard, he made some borders, and planted some of the roots and cuttings he had got, such as were fit to be planted in that cold season. When the month of March came, he sowed a great

variety of seeds, and had the pleasure of seeing some of his pretty flowers in bloom, auriculas, crocuses, cowslips, and many others.

One morning, he gathered a very choice collection from his garden, and put them on the breakfast-table in a glass of water, before his mamma came into the room. She was greatly surprised to find he had so many; and that all his plants had grown so well; and said that he must have taken great care indeed to set them well, for that it required more experience and nicety than she thought he had gained.

"But," said Charles, "I will tell you how I learned, mamma: I saw the man Adam, whom you had, setting roots and cuttings in your garden, and I went to him and asked how deep I should set them in the ground; he showed me how he did it, and offered to set them for me, if I liked; but I said I believed my father intended I should do all myself, and that I had got a book to teach me how to

work in the garden. When Adam heard that, he began to laugh, and said, 'I think, Master Charles, that must be a wonderful book that can teach people to work in the garden; but it did not teach you how to set the plants you had got.' So I said that the reason was, that the book just said, 'put the bulbous roots below the surface of the earth, but not too deep,' and that I did not know what was too deep; so then Adam said, that experience was worth all the books that ever were written about gardening; and what do you think, mamma?"

"Why, my dear," said his mamma, "I think we can hardly take Adam's opinion of all the books that ever were written on gardening, since we know that he cannot read, and therefore cannot tell what those books contain; nor does Adam know that many, and indeed almost all the rules and maxims by which he manages the garden, are set down in the very books

he seems to despise. It is true, your book did not give you very accurate rules for planting, but it is taken for granted that most people understood this part of the business. I suppose the writer of your calender did not expect to have so young a gardener to direct, as my little Charley," added Mrs. Markham, patting his head, "or he would have been more particular in his explanations."

"I am just thinking," said Charles, after a pause, during which his mother had been arranging his flowers so as to show them to the most advantage, "I am just thinking what a pity it is that all these spring flowers will be over when papa comes back; and that he will not have seen how nice my garden looked, when these flowers were in it, and the beds just raked after the seeds were sown."

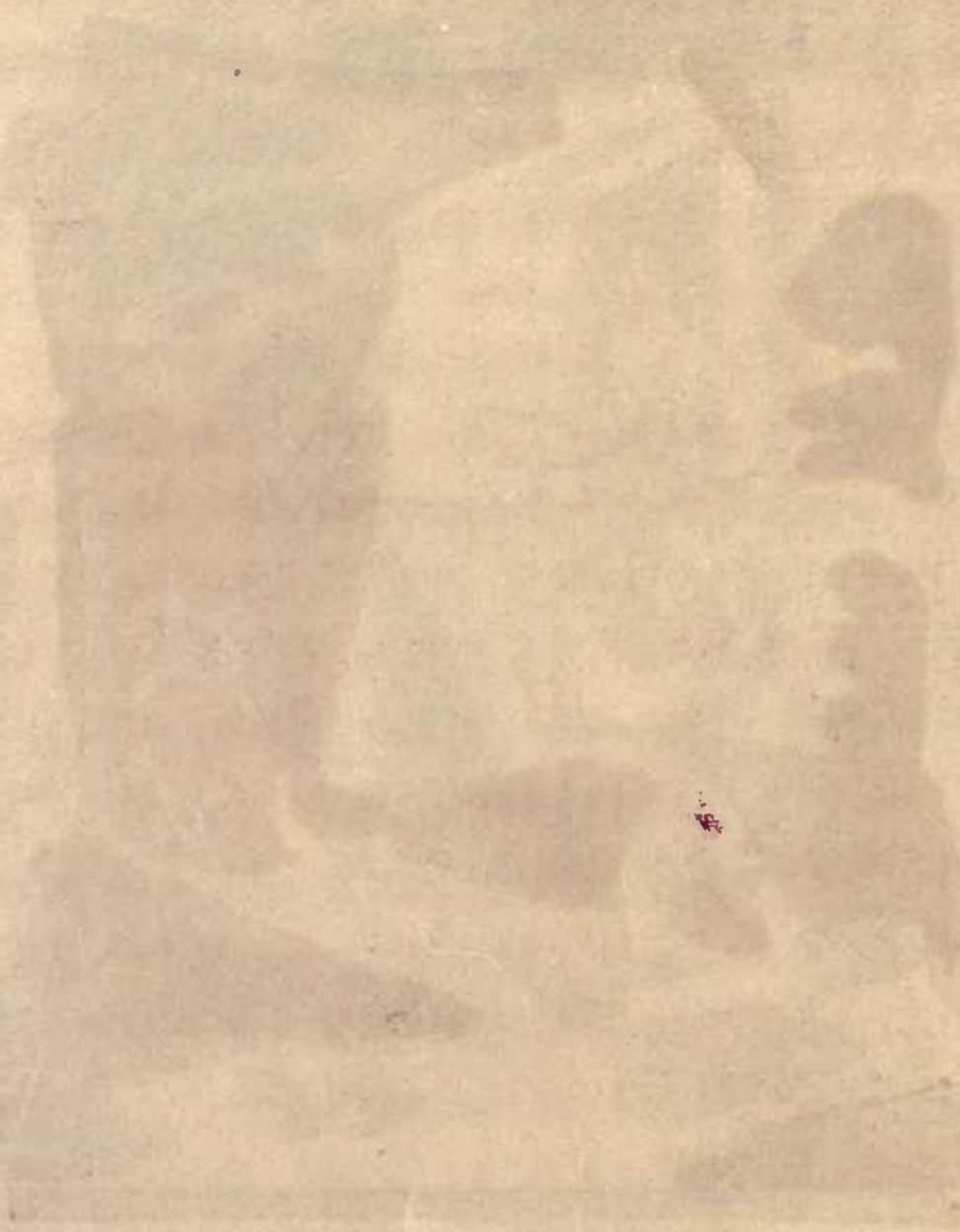
"But," said Mrs. Markham, "he will see the fine summer flowers, and all the sweet annuals, that he could not see now.

"I wish," said Henry, "that I could draw better; "and then we might contrive to give our papa some idea of what the garden is like, just now, if I could make a drawing of that nosegay; I think I may try, at all events."

This proposal delighted Charles, and Henry exerted their best skill to do justice to the production of his brother's garden.

CHAP. IV.

CHARLES had now sown a great many seeds, raked the beds very neatly, picked out every little weed that made its appearance in his well kept garden, and spread some gravel, mixed with many little white pebbles, over the walks, to make them firm and dry; when, on going one day to this most precious spot, on which he had bestowed so much care, he found that a hen had made her way into it, with a large brood of chickens; and had scratched up his seeds, and broken down several of his flowers, rooted up a whole row of peas, and was at that moment herself very comfortable in a hole in the earth, close to the root of his favourite, his beautiful, dark mulberry-coloured auricula.



CHARLES DRIVING THE HEN AND CHICKENS OUT OF HIS GARDEN.

Charles ran to her with his rake in his hand, and if the blow he aimed had indeed struck the poor animal, I fear it would have killed her, or at least broken a wing or a leg; but she escaped, and ran away screaming out of the garden door, and towards the house; and so angry was he with the poor hen, that did not know she had been doing wrong, that he threw stones after her, till she ran in at a glass door that opened from one of the sitting rooms of the house, to the walk leading to the garden; and flew frightened and screaming round the room, till Mrs. Markham, hearing the uproar, came in to see what was the matter. She saw the hen try to fly through one of the windows, and called Charles away from where he stood at the open door, fearful to come in, lest he should make the hen throw down and break some of the china, or other ornaments in the room. Mrs. Markham, with some difficulty, got the frightened animal out

of the room, and then asked Charles, who lay sobbing on the floor, what had happened; for some time Charles really could not speak, so violent was the passion of grief he was in. At length, after many efforts he was able to say: "My garden is quite spoiled, and it was so nice this very morning; but that great, ugly, horrible hen, has scraped up my seeds, and destroyed every thing."

"My poor Charles," said his mother, "indeed I do not wonder you are grieved to have your nice garden spoiled. How could the hen have got in? this never happened before."

"No, indeed," said Charles, "for I always took so much care to shut the garden door; but to-day I ran into the house with a beautiful hyacinth, to ask Henry if he could add it to the picture; and I must have forgot to shut the gate."

"Then you are yourself to blame, after all, my dear boy," said his mother, "and not the

hen, she was only doing as a good parent ought to do, seeking food for her little chickens."

Richard now came running in, he heard Charles crying, and came to see what it was about. When he heard of the mischief done to the garden, he was very sorry.

"But," said Richard, "this might have happened without its being Charles's fault, for I remember, last autumn, when Adam was wheeling weeds out of the garden, and left the door open, once or twice the hens, aye the turkies too, got in!"

"I will make a hedge round my own garden," said Charles, "and I will leave no opening for an entrance, but jump over when I want to go in myself."

Richard laughed at this idea: "Oh, Charles, Charles," said he, "what a churlish looking thing that would be; why, you could not expect that mamma would jump over your hedge, if she wanted to go into your garden, and even

papa, who gave it to you, if he came home, I suppose, you would invite him to take a peep over the hedge."

"Besides, my dear," said Mrs. Markham, "the hedge would take some time to grow; it must be two or three feet high, at least, before it would prevent a hen from flying over, even with her wing feathers cut, as our fowls are kept; a little paling of sticks would do better, but you could not make that, so it is best that you should always try and remember to shut the gate." Here Mrs. Markham, who had a bad cold, went back to her own room, after telling Charles she would give him seeds to sow, in place of those the hen had scraped up.

CHAP. V.

What Mrs. Markham had said about the paling, was not lost upon the kind-hearted and industrious Richard; he was just then making a little book-shelf, to hang up in the play-room for their books of amusement, and was taking great pains to put it tightly and strongly together, for some of his work had come to pieces, and disappointed him greatly, and he was determined to try and do this well; but when he saw poor Charles's distress about his garden, and heard his mother speak of a paling, it occurred to him that he could make such a one as would prevent a hen from getting in, with some branches that had been lopped off the fir trees. He had heard his father say, these

branches were to be burned; so he supposed they were not thought of any use, and he went and asked his mother if he might take them; she said he might; so he set to work, and sawed them of a proper length, about three feet, he then took four strong thick pieces, and drove them into the ground at the four corners of the garden, and two at the side where Charles chose to have the entrance, leaving room between them for a gate. Charles held the stakes while Richard hammered them into the ground.

He then put the four pieces across each other in the manner of a latticed window, and nailed them together where they went across. In this manner he enclosed the entire garden, from one gate post round to the other: but this took Richard a many days, and required a great deal of patience, and often he thought "if this was for myself, I would give it up; but that would be such a disappointment to Charles,

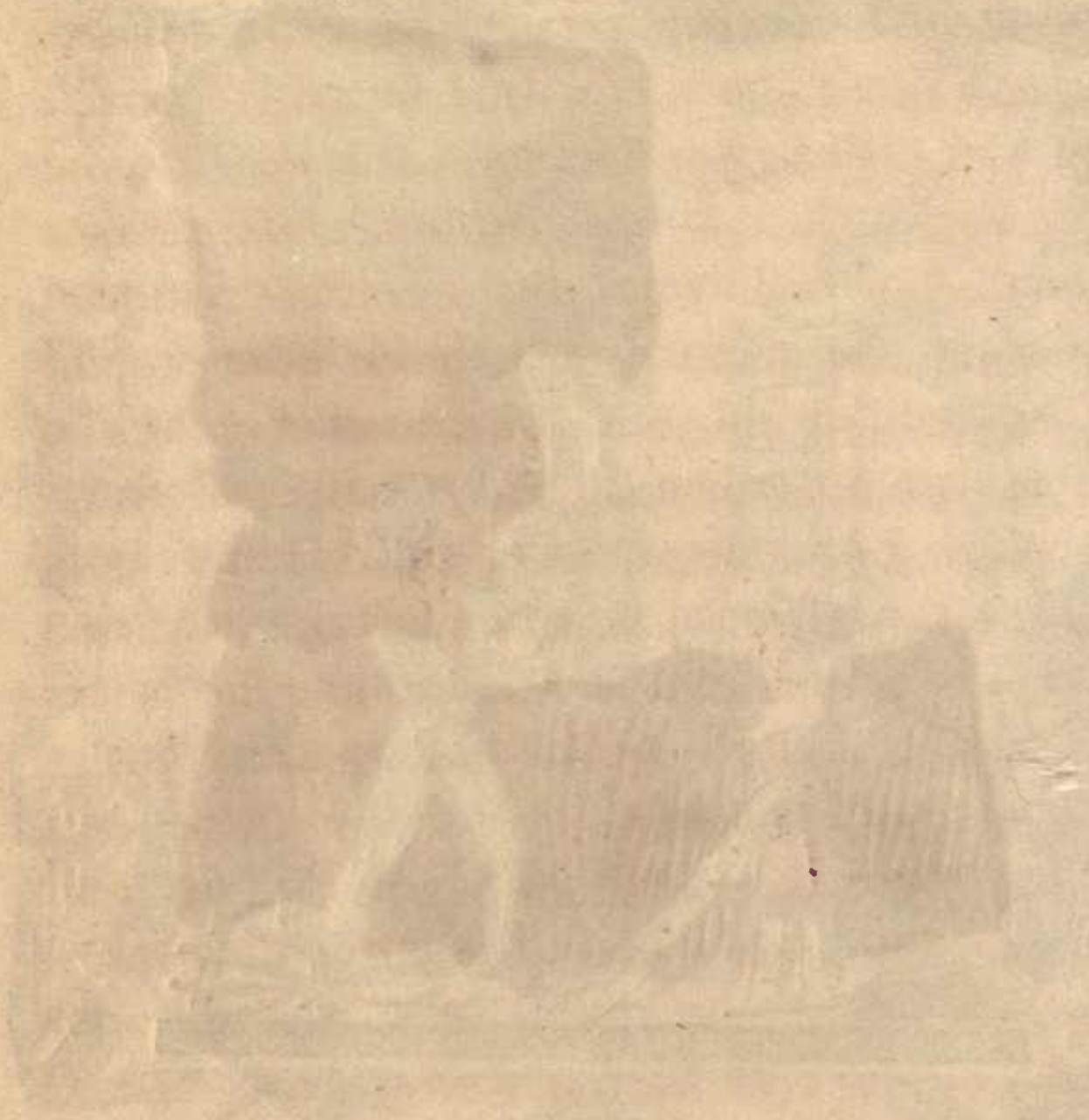
that I will make myself finish it." And when it was done, Charles did not know how to express his delight.

All that was now wanting was a gate, but Richard had neither hinges nor fastenings for one; so they agreed that when their mother was well enough to walk in the garden, they would show her the nice paling, and ask her for hinges and a latch for the gate, and Richard made a neat little gate, and had it ready. One morning, when the sun was shining, Mrs. Markham went into the garden, and Richard and Charles ran after her, to enjoy her surprise at the sight of the paling; and she was indeed very pleasantly surprised to see so much good useful work done by Richard, and done to oblige his brother; and she said she had great pleasure in giving them the latch and hinges which the gate required, to make it complete.

CHAP. VI.

The spring flowers had bloomed, withered, and died away; and the summer flowers were beginning to blow; the currants and gooseberries were formed, and growing larger and larger every day: the mignionette and sweet pea scented the whole garden, and Henry made a beautiful drawing of them and some early pinks; he had acquired the art of drawing flowers with great accuracy and beauty; it was not the kind of drawing he liked best; he preferred painting heads, or human figures, or animals, but he was told that it was a good practice, and he wished to give a good likeness of Charles's flowers. It happened sometimes, however, that like other young artists, he

RICHARD MAKING THE PALINGS FOR CHARLES' GARDEN.
WHATMAN



undertook more than he could well perform; he sketched several groups of flowers, but delayed completing them, that he might sketch more, till the flowers were withered, and he had to make them out by trying to remember the shades of colour and little touches required to perfect the picture, which he often found very difficult to do, and which never could be done so exactly when he had not the real flowers before him; his mother told Henry how much better it would be to undertake less, and to finish it better; and he tried to get the better of this fault, though still he had a strong desire to begin many pictures.

One evening, when Mrs. Markham and Charles happened to be in the garden, Richard gave Henry a laughable account of poor Charles's anger at the hen and chickens. It was over, all the mischief was repaired, and they thought it was a fair subject for mirth; so Richard described, and Henry laughed, till at

last it struck Henry that it would make an excellent picture.

In a moment his pencil was at work; a tame likeness would not do; Charles's figure was a little caricatured, he was represented running after the hen, his rake uplifted, and he in a very threatening attitude.

The hen flew away terribly frightened, her wings outspread, all her feathers raised; the chickens running here and there; and one nearly flying into Charles's face in its fright; the devastated garden was in the back-ground, in piteous disorder. It was a spirited sketch, and wonderfully well executed; so much so that Henry felt a little vain of it.

As soon as their mother returned, he and Richard ran laughing to show her the picture. Charles seeing the amusement it caused his brother, asked to look at it. His mother held the picture to him gravely, without saying one word. After he had looked at it for some

time without speaking, the colour rose to his face, till his cheeks, brow, and neck, were all over red, and tears started in his eyes; he turned away, covered his face with both his hands, and leaning his head on the table, sobbed aloud.

"Oh, mamma! give me that picture," cried Henry, "I did not think,—I am sure I did not mean to hurt Charles's feelings; but I thought as it happened so long ago, and his garden is so nice now, that he would have laughed at it too."

"No, Henry, said his mother, "neither you nor Richard would have laughed at this picture, in the same circumstances. Charles is conscious, that on the occasion in question, he was too angry, (a very pardonable fault in one so young, and considering the disappointment he had met with,) and he is sensible too, how very foolish it was in him to be angry with the innocent hen, that did not know the injury

she was doing him; but he could not help feeling grieved and hurt by your bringing this instance of his thoughtless anger before us in a caricature; the ridicule is more felt because it is in part deserved, but it makes it appear not the less unkind in you to recall it in this exaggerated picture.

"Oh, mamma, do, do be so kind as to give me that abominable picture," said Henry, who had looked greatly distressed and ashamed, while his mother spoke.

His mother gave him the picture, and he tore it to pieces, and threw it into the fire. He then turned to Charles, whose face was still hid, and said, in an humble voice, "Charles, will you forgive me? I did not think of what I was doing; I feel far more ashamed than you have any right to do."

Charles held out his hand at once to Henry; Richard asked forgiveness, too, for joining in the ill-natured jest.

Richard had received a present of some foreign shells from an old lady, who was pleased by observing he had some taste for natural history; and he had collected several curious minerals and other things, himself. He now determined on making a case to hold them in. He explained his project to his mamma, and begged she would help him to make the plan.

So one day, his regular studies being over, he, by her directions, drew a very neat plan, on a large card, of a flat case, with divisions in it of different shapes and sizes, but arranged in a uniform manner, so as to present a very regular appearance. He then began with rule and compasses to prepare the wood; he made the case in the proportion of a foot to an inch, that is, for what was an inch in the plan on the card, he measured a foot in the board that was for the case; the plan was three inches long, and two broad; so that the case was three feet long, and two broad, or three feet by two.

It required the greatest nicety to fit in the little divisions; but Richard was careful and persevering, he had already overcome many difficulties, and this gave him both courage and skill to surmount new ones.

When this case was finished, Mrs. Markham gave him hinges and a lock. And Henry covered the outside with dark green marbled paper; and on the lid he pasted a very pretty picture, which he made on purpose for it, representing some handsome shells.

CHAP. VII.

EARLY in the month of June, a letter from Mr. Markham told his delighted family that he would soon be home: he mentioned a certain Friday, when he said he hoped to arrive at a neighbouring town about four miles off; and he added, that if Mrs. Markham would meet him there, with their children, they could all journey pleasantly home together. He could not tell at what time of the day the stage coach would arrive in the town, but he recommended them to be early, as he said he was very impatient to be at home.

Accordingly, on the day mentioned, just after an early breakfast, the whole family, Mrs. Markham and her three sons, set out in an open carriage; the day was fine, and the country

looked beautiful, but they could not think or speak of any thing but their papa. When they came to the inn where the coach, in which they expected Mr. Markham, stopped, they were told it would not arrive till evening.

Here was a disappointment which the boys bore but indifferently. An inn is but a dull place; and this one was particularly so, for it was situated in a narrow street, and opposite to it were two houses with all the shutters closed, few persons passed, now and then a horse dragged a cart lazily along, or a foot passenger, intent on business, looking straight before him, passed at a quick pace. A heavy shower came on, which prevented them from getting out to walk about, and they could find no amusement within doors; there was not a book to be seen, and they examined again and again the few pictures which the room contained, till they were quite tired; their mother was making memorandums in her pocket book,

CHARLES' FEELINGS WOUNDED AT BEING CARICATURED.
T.H. Jones lith

when on looking up, she saw three melancholy looking faces, gazing listlessly at her,

"What shall we do, mamma?" said Richard, "for it will be so long till evening."

"Yes, my dear," said Mrs. Markham: "It will be six long hours till the coach arrives, how shall we kill six long hours?" "Kill, mamma, how do you mean kill?"

"That is the word used by those systematic idlers, who seem to seek only for the readiest means of getting over the time; but time was not given us to be so thrown away, every moment is precious, and should be used for enjoyment and improvement; for to waste time is really to shorten life, so let us try what can be done till the rain is over."

Their mamma then repeated a short poem to them, and the boys followed her example, each narrating some little tale or anecdote he had heard or read; this kept them amused and occupied, till the rain was over; then they

went out to walk, and look at the town and neighbourhood, for the boys had not very often been in this town before, and they were now old enough to observe and understand much that on former occasions they would have passed by without interest: Henry felt inclined to linger at the windows of the print-shops to inspect the pictures, Richard looked into one or two cabinet-makers, but as he saw no men at work, and only fine pieces of furniture set out for show, he went on. At length, in a narrow street, near the outskirts of the town, he saw some chips of wood laying about a door, and he eagerly called out:

"Mamma! I think that must be the work-shop of a carpenter, will you allow me to go in and see him at work."

When they came to the door, Mrs. Markham said: "that is a turner, you have not seen a lathe, so we will go in and look at him." All the children were pleased with what they saw.

A piece of rough-looking wood was, in a short time, by a few turns of the wheel, and movement of the turner's hands, converted into a nice tapering leg for a table, with ornamented rings, raised or depressed on its surface; then the turner, by rubbing some sand-paper on it, made it beautifully smooth.

They could have staid here for hours, but dinner had been ordered at a particular time, and they had to go back to the inn. Soon after dinner, the coach arrived: they were all watching eagerly from the inn windows, when they heard the distant sound of the guard's horn, presently the noise of wheels, and the feet of horses, and after a short time, the coach drove up to the inn door; they saw their papa, he smiled and bowed to them from the coach window; the boys ran towards the parlour-door, and in a minute were clinging round their kind father. Their own carriage was ordered immediately, and they were soon on their way home.

As they drove on, Mr. Markham made many enquiries about the different people who worked for him, and about all that had taken place since he left home. Six months was a long absence, and he had a great deal to hear. He wished particularly to know if his boys had been attentive to their various studies, while he was not near to encourage and instruct them; at length he said: "And the three baskets, have you found much amusement in them? to-morrow I must see what use you have made of them."

It was late when they got home, and the three boys were sent to bed; they rose early the next day. Henry collected all his pictures, and all the drawing materials he had in his basket, to let his papa see he had taken good care of them, and put them again into his basket. Richard put all his tools into his basket; and Charles had in his, some nice green-pease, a cabbage leaf with a few ripe

early strawberries, and some green gooseberries for tarts; he had also a large bowl of flowers.

After breakfast, Henry took his basket in one hand and his pictures in the other, Richard his basket, and also his case of shells; and Charles his gay and fragrant collection of fruit and flowers. The elder boys agreed to give precedence to Charles.

"He will be impatient," said Henry to Richard, "and you and I can wait." "Yes," added Richard, gaily, "and his flowers might be withered, as well as his patience be flown, before papa had paid all his compliments to our grand productions." "And do you take the next place in the procession, Richard. Now march," said Henry. The procession, as Henry called it, entered the room where Mr. and Mrs. Markham were sitting; Charles, as had been settled, went first, he placed his bowl of flowers

on the table, and his basket beside it, saying: "These all grew in my garden."

Mr. Markham admired them very much, and said, "you have been far more steady than I expected."

"Oh," said Charles, "mamma told me I should never have a nice garden, nor ever get any thing to grow well, if I changed my plans often, or transplanted things from one bed to another; so I left my plants to grow where I had set them at first; though I often wished to have them in another place."

"Your mamma's advice has been of great use, then," said his father, "for there is little chance that your plants would have borne either flowers or fruit, if you had moved them from one bed to another." Mr. Markham then tasted the strawberries, and said they were excellent; and he proposed to Mrs. Markham, that the peas should be boiled, and the goose-

berries made into tarts, for dinner; which Mrs. Markham immediately ordered to be done.

Richard came next, and showed his box or case of shells and minerals; and lastly, Henry exhibited his drawings, pointing out the flowers which had grown in Charles's garden. Mr. Markham said he scarcely should have believed that Henry could have improved so much in drawing, in six months, as he saw by these pictures he had done; he thought Richard's box very neatly put together, but asked if that was all he had done?

"Oh, no, no," cried out Henry and Charles, "he has done a great deal besides, for us, and every one in the house."

Henry ran off to bring his drawing-board, while Charles told of the paling of his garden, and the nice gate, and Mrs. Markham mentioned that he had done several little pieces of work for her, very neatly. Mr. Markham exa-

mined the drawing-board, and said it showed a great deal of skill in the making.

"My dear boys," said he, "I could scarce have hoped that you would have made so good a use of the three baskets; it will make me consider what presents I shall give you, both as a recompense for your industry, and an encouragement for your perseverance; but far more than all you have learned from these gifts, I am pleased to observe the kindness and generosity with which you have assisted one another.

A short time after this, Mr. Markham gave to Henry a beautiful little bay poney; to Richard, a turning lathe, with tools complete; and to Charles, a small ship nicely rigged, to sail on a large pond at the front of the lawn.

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